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countries and to the co-operation of all for the restoration of normal production.

"The allied powers consider that the fundamental and indispensable conditions for the realization of an efficacious effort are capable of being defined in general terms as follows:

"(1) The nations cannot claim the right to dictate to each other the principles according to which they must organize within their frontiers, their régime of property, their economy, and their government. It is the right of each country to choose for itself the system which it prefers.

"(2) Nevertheless, it is not possible to place foreign capital in order to help a country, unless the foreigners who provide the capital have a certitude that their property and their rights will be respected and that the fruits of their enterprise will be assured.

"(3) This feeling of security cannot be re-established unless nations or their governments desiring to obtain foreign credits freely engage (a) To recognize all public debts and obligations which have been contracted, or will be contracted or guaranteed by States, municipalities, or other public organizations, and to recognize also obligations to restore or, in case of default, to indemnify all foreign interests for loss or damage which has been caused by the confiscation or sequestration of property; (b) to establish legal and juristic punishment and assure the impartial execution of all commercial or other contracts.

"(4) The nations ought to have available convenient means of exchange; in general, financial and monetary conditions ought to exist which offer sufficient guarantees.

"(5) All nations ought to engage to abstain from all propaganda which is subversive of the political system established in other countries.

"(6) All nations ought to take a common engagement to abstain from all aggression on their neighbors.

"If, with a view to assuring the necessary conditions for the development of the commerce of Russia, the Russian Government claims official recognition, the allied governments cannot accord this recognition unless the Russian Government accepts the preceding conditions."

Two lines of postscript are added, that the conference would be held in Italy and that the United States will be invited to participate.

Conferences are in the air. Farmer and labor organizations, scientific bodies, economists, educationists, religionists, statesmen, are in conferences here and around the globe. The world is turning from arrangements predicated upon force to agreements buttressed upon good will. The effort is to escape from such things as the Holy Alliance. Men everywhere are coming to realize that there can be no peace between the nations founded upon a victorious military organization.

Surely the United States is continuing once more its rôle as a world power in the realm of international policy. The ideas and ideals of the makers of America, the smoke of battles clearing away, are coming again unto their own.

CONFERENCES OR LEAGUES

HISTORY DEMONSTRATES no fact more clearly than that the hope of international achievement lies in the direction of conferences of delegates duly chosen and accredited by the nations concerned. The great international achievements have always come about by the means of such conferences. It is thus that treaties are made. Out of international conferences has sprung all that we have in the nature of co-operation between the republics of the Western Hemisphere. It is the way international business was accomplished at Philadelphia in 1787, at Vienna in 1815, at Berlin in 1878, at The Hague in 1899 and 1907, at Niagara Falls in 1914, at Paris in 1918. It is the hope of Washington in 1921-1922.

The method is simple and acceptable to all the powers. In the case of controversy, the interested nations appoint delegates, give to them their instructions, and send them to a common meeting place. These delegates, acting under their instructions, discuss the issues involved, come to a meeting of minds as far as possible, and report their conclusions to their respective governments. The governments consider the recommendations, and if they prove acceptable they are ratified. When ratified, the recommendations become laws for the nations ratifying. This is the course which history has shown through the many years to be acceptable and efficacious. No other method has been found to be either acceptable or efficacious.

The reason for the success of this method is simple. It is founded on the fact that neither men nor nations are willing to obey, at least for any length of time, the commands or directions of men. No one will obey a man for very long. There seems to be but one thing that men generally will agree to obey, and agree further to do everything in their power to get other men to obey; that is law. When, by direct action or through their representatives, men or nations set up rules of conduct, and agree to them, they obey them. If a man or a nation runs foul of the law, disobeys it, defies it, or abrogates it, the other parties to the law array themselves against him; the hand of every man is against him. Men insist that laws which they themselves have adopted shall be obeyed.

This is probably civilization's greatest achievement. The best criterion of the moral standards of a people is their system of laws. The uniting force of society—preserving personal security, the family, life, liberty, happiness, and the common weal—is law. Where law accomplishes these great benefits best, there society reaches its highest levels, and there the greatest number of human beings attain unto their choicest hopes. In many ways the conference now meeting in Washington is but another practical expression of this abiding

fact. Our supreme task is to make the lawless law-abiding.

Every attempt to ignore this fundamental thing in human relationship has met defeat. The reason why America is not in the League of Nations is primarily that many in America conceived that organization to be an attempt to set up a government not of laws, but of men. Such undoubtedly was the plan of its founders. The outspoken purpose was to create an international organization of nine men dominated by five, which group of men of the great powers would have the power to dictate the foreign policies, at least of the small nations. Until the League of Nations can overcome this impression, it cannot count upon the co-operation of the United States; indeed, in our opinion, it cannot function in any manner commensurate with its high purposes.

There is something in the very words indicating the differences between covenant or league on the one hand and conference on the other. Ecclesiastically, covenant is a solemn compact between members of a church to maintain something, such as its faith, discipline, and the like. In history, covenant is connected with reformation and defense. In law, a covenant is a contract under seal. With the passing of years it will probably be increasingly agreed that the Covenant of the League of Nations adopted in Paris was a concrete, if fundamentally mistaken, expression of the noble ideal of a governed world. Following the attempt to set up the League of Nations, the future will witness an increasing attempt on the part of the nations to substitute reason for power and right for might.

Undoubtedly the meetings of the Council of the League and of the Assembly at Geneva, bringing representatives of various nationalities together around a common table, will play its part toward the fuller realization of the equality of States before the law. It will bring home to men increasingly the meaning of Paul's philosophy, that we are members one of another. America knows or apprehends these things. America knows that the will to end war is an international will, requiring an international medium for its orderly and effective expression. But America knows, further, that there is a difference between league or covenant on the one hand and conference on the other. The difference in name is a difference in substance. Leagues and covenants are Calvinistic; they are sanctions of force, of mandataries, of imperial grabs, of domination. League comes from an ancient word meaning to bind, a word that is given to us not only in league, but in ligature.

Conference, interestingly enough, harks back to two ancient words meaning to *bear with*. The Methodists employ the word in connection with their stated meetings for the consideration of ecclesiastical matters. The

Congregationalists use it for their system of voluntary associations.

The Conference at Washington will succeed only so far as it functions as a free association of free peoples in voluntary conference for the promotion of their mutual weal. It is in conference that correlative rights and duties are revealed and balanced. In a conference such as this in Washington there must be no grabbing of any Shantung, of any Korea, of any China. There must be no demanding of indemnities at the point of a pistol. There must be no carving of empires into new and warring elements. There must be no impositions of will by means of force in any Danzig, Saar Basin, or so-called Mandataries of the seven seas. There must be no balancing of power on the points of bayonets. There must be no piddling with plebiscites in any Upper Silesia. Quixotism, Pollyannaism, serve a purpose; but international achievement, mixing brains and history with its good will, must come to its own again here in the Conference at Washington. If not, the Washington Conference will fail.

If Japan signs on the dotted line because told that she must, it would be as well or better that she sign not at all. If France be relegated to the position of a second-rate power, treated as such, and criticised for resenting such patronizing airs, it would have been better had she never been invited to this conference. If the United States and Great Britain insist upon dictating to other nations weaker in lungs and legs, it would have been better had the Conference never been born.

So many of the hopes of forward-looking peoples rest upon this Washington Conference that, true it is, might and threats, dictation and coercion, covenants and leagues, must all be eliminated. Only in the spirit of conference, *bearing with*, mutuality under law, can this Washington gathering add its little to the slow up-building of that international justice which alone can overthrow wrongs and forfend the wastes of war.

OUR CRITICISM OF FRANCE

FRANCE, our first and only ally, is once more treading the winepress alone. She is belabored from nearly every hand. Some one arises in the American Congress to propose that she be asked to pay her billions of indebtedness. She is advised to muster out her armies and to haul her fleet up on the beach. She is accused of chauvinism and imperialism. She is accused of a greedy *haute finance* and of unwillingness to co-operate with other nations. Such are a few of the criticisms hurled with some savagery against the nation which has suffered most because of the World War.

How quickly we change, and how soon we seem to forget. The France of 1922 has not changed from the